

## Q “Should I turn off the air bag?”

**No.** Doctors recommend that pregnant women wear seat belts and leave the air bag switch on; they work together to protect both the mother and the unborn baby in a crash.

## Q “Should I adjust my seat?”

**Yes.** You should move the front seat as far back as possible. Your breastbone should be at least 10 inches from the steering wheel or dashboard. As your abdomen grows during pregnancy, move the seat back to keep as much distance as possible while still allowing a driver to reach the pedals.

## Need more help? Contact us

For more information about child safety seats, booster seats, inspection/fitting stations in your area, seat belts, air bags, and other highway safety issues, call the DOT Auto Safety Hotline at 1-888-DASH-2-DOT (1-888-327-4236) or visit our web site at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)



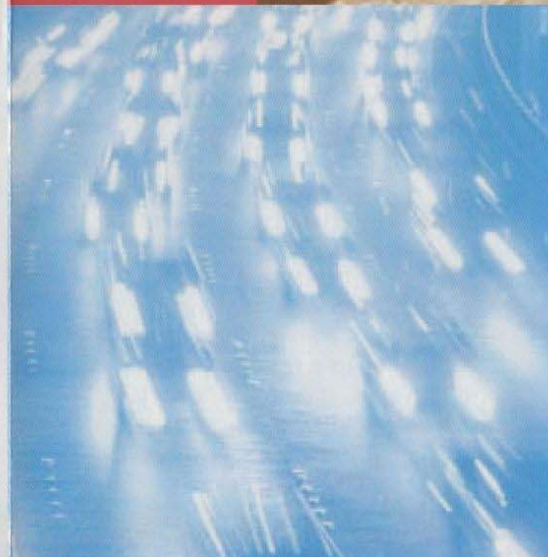
Thanks to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition for their review and input for this brochure.

For more information contact the  
**North Dakota Department of Health**  
MCH Injury Prevention Program  
1.800.472.2286

DOT HS 809 506  
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## Q “Should pregnant women wear seat belts?”

ANSWERS TO  
AN EXPECTANT  
MOTHER'S COMMON  
QUESTIONS ABOUT  
TRAFFIC SAFETY



**Q:**  
“I’m pregnant.  
Should I wear  
a seat belt?”

**A:**  
**Yes.** Doctors  
recommend it. In a  
crash, seat belts are  
the best protection  
for both you *and* your  
unborn child.

**Q:**  
“What if the  
car or truck  
has air bags?”

**A:**  
You still need to buckle up.  
Air bags are designed to work  
with seat belts, not replace  
them. Without a seat belt, a  
pregnant woman can be  
thrown into a rapidly opening  
air bag—a movement of such  
force could injure or even kill  
the mother and her  
unborn child.

**“What’s the  
right way  
to wear my  
seat belt?”**

**NEVER** place  
the lap belt  
above or on  
your belly.

Place the shoulder belt  
across your chest  
(between your breasts)  
and away from your neck.



Never place the  
shoulder belt  
behind your back or  
under your arm.

Adjust the lap belt across  
your hips/pelvis, and  
below your belly.

Once your baby is born,  
don’t forget these steps  
to keep your child safe:

### 4 STEPS FOR KIDS



INFANT

TODDLER

BOOSTER

SEAT BELT

1. Use **REAR-FACING INFANT SEATS** in the back seat from birth to at least one year old and at least 20 pounds.
2. Use **FORWARD-FACING TODDLER SEATS** in the back seat from age one to about age four and 20 to 40 pounds.
3. Use **BOOSTER SEATS** in the back seat from about age four and 40 pounds to at least age eight unless 4’9”.
4. Use **SEAT BELTS** at age eight or older or taller than 4’9”. All children 12 and under should ride in the back seat.